

Early Childhood Caries



Facts about Early Childhood Caries

- It develops very rapidly
- The upper front teeth are affected first
- The baby molars are the next teeth affected
- When it becomes very severe, the lower front teeth are affected

Sleeping times are not feeding times.

The baby who goes to bed with a bottle can get painful tooth decay. Instead you can:

- Offer a blanket, stuffed animal or favorite toy
- Give baby a warm bath
- Rock baby to sleep
- As a last resort, allow WATER ONLY in the bottle

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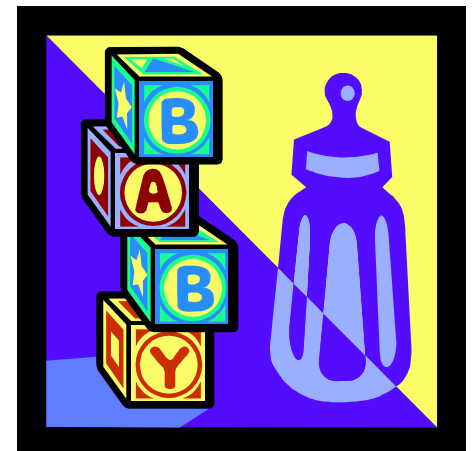
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<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/PHSD/family-health/oral-health/family-oralHealth-index.shtml>



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Early Childhood Caries Prevention



What is Early Childhood Caries?

ECC is a serious, infectious disease that causes tooth decay in babies and young children. It is caused when sugary liquids stay on the teeth for long periods. Examples of sugars are: sugar in breast milk, formula, cow's milk, fruit juice, and soda pop. These sugars are changed to acids by bacteria in the mouth. This acid dissolves the teeth, causing them to decay.

This happens most when children:

- ✂ Use a sleep time bottle or sippy cup container with a sugary liquid throughout the day.
- ✂ Share saliva with mothers, other caregivers, or other children.

Early Childhood Caries is PREVENTABLE!

When not prevented, treatment is very costly, can be painful and may affect permanent teeth.

Why are baby teeth important?

Baby teeth help babies with

- ✂ Speaking
- ✂ Ability to chew their food
- ✂ Keeping space for adult teeth

How do I keep my child's teeth healthy?

- ✂ **Don't put your baby to bed with a bottle.**
- ✂ **Never prop a bottle while your baby is sleeping.**
- ✂ **Don't allow your baby to walk around with a bottle or sippy cup.**
- ✂ **Don't share your fork or spoon with your baby at mealtime.** This passes decay-causing germs from your mouth to baby's mouth.

- ✂ **Do not clean a dropped pacifier with your mouth.**
- ✂ **Wean your baby from a bottle to a cup by 9-10 months old.**
- ✂ **Wipe your baby's teeth after feeding.** Wipe especially along the gum line using a soft cloth or gauze.
- ✂ **Supervise child's tooth brushing.** Use a "rice-sized" smear of fluoridated toothpaste for an infant and a "pea-sized" amount at age 2.
- ✂ **Make sure your baby gets enough fluoride from fluoride drops or drinking water.** Ask your doctor or dentist about this.
- ✂ **Set a good example.** Brush & floss your own teeth every day. Visit a dentist every 6 months.
- ✂ **Visit a dentist.** Take your child to a dentist by 12 months of age and establish a dental home.

